

## Message Text

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17

ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /124 W

----- 094864

R 270615Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6381

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CDR JCRC NKP

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 7357

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, LA

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH SOTH PHETRASY ON ARRANGEMENTS  
FOR EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON POW/DIC MATTERS

REF: VIENTIANE 7187

1. AS INDICATED FINAL PARA REFTTEL, WE HAVE BEEN  
SEEKING APPOINTMENT FOR EMBOFF WITH SOTH PHETRASY,  
CHIEF OF LPF DELEGATION TO JOINT COMMISSION (JCIA),  
TO OBJECT TO LPF FAILURE TO HONOR ARTICLE 18(C) OF  
PROTOCOL, CALLING FOR EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON POW'S  
AND DIC'S WITHIN 30 DAYS OF SIGNATURE OF PROTOCOL.  
ON OCTOBER 26, SOTH CALLED EMBOFF PERSONALLY TO ASK  
HIM TO COME STRAIGHT AWAY FOR MEETING.

2. EMBOFF READ SOTH RECENT PRESS ARTICLES ATTRIBUTING  
REMARKS TO HIM THAT "PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON DEATHS  
OF THOSE NOW MISSING" WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT FORMATION OF  
NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT. EMBOFF THEN READ ARTICLE  
18(C) ALOUD AND ASKED WHY LPF HAD NOT COMPLIED WITH  
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30-DAY DEADLINE. SOME INFORMATION MUST BE AVAILABLE

ON LPF SIDE. WE HAD BEEN INFORMED BY RLG THAT IT HAD BEGUN COMPILING DATA ON PRISONERS IT HELD, INCLUDING DATA ON DIC'S. USG AND AMERICAN PEOPLE WERE DISTURBED THAT LPF HAD MADE NO PREPARATION TO IMPLEMENT PROVISION OF PROTOCOL WITH EARLIEST TIME-FRAME.

3. SOTH REPLIED THAT SINCE JCIA HAD NOT YET BEEN FORMED, NO INFORMATION COULD BE PASSED. ONCE JCIA BEGAN MEETING FORMALLY, IT WOULD BEGIN DELIBERATING TIME-TABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF THE PROTOCOL, INCLUDING ARTICLE 18(C). BUT PRIORITIES HAD TO BE ESTABLISHED. FIRST PRIORITY TO LPF WAS NEUTRALIZATION OF VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG, SECOND WAS FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT AND JOINT NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL. EMBOFF OBJECTED THAT OBVIOUSLY FIRST PRIORITY INTENDED IN PROTOCOL WAS EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON POW'S AND DIC'S. TIME-FRAME FOR THAT PROCESS WAS EXPLICITLY LINKED TO FINITE DATE OF SIGNATURE OF PROTOCOL, NOT UNKNOWN DATE OF FORMATION OF GOVERNMENT. SOTH REPLIED THAT PROCESS OF EXCHANGE OF SUCH INFORMATION WOULD BEGIN AFTER JCIA BEGAN MEETING FORMALLY, AND WOULD NOT AWAIT FORMATION OF GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, THIS QUESTION WOULD HAVE TO FOLLOW OTHER MORE URGENT MATTERS ON JCIA AGENDA.

4. EMBOFF SUGGESTED THAT, TO FACILITATE TASK OF JCIA, ONE OF ITS SUBSIDIARY "JOINT MOBILE GROUPS" PROVIDED FOR IN ARTICLE 22(A) OF THE PROTOCOL BE EXPLICITLY ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITY FOR HANDLING ARTICLE 18(C) AND OTHER POW/MIA MATTERS. THIS WOULD ENABLE BOTH SIDES TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT IN SEPARATE HUMANITARIAN CHANNELS, WHILE AT SAME TIME CENTRAL JCIA BODY COULD DEVOTE ITSELF TO FORMATION OF GOVERNMENT. SOTH SAID FLATLY THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE. EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS AND PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON DIC'S AND MIA'S WAS RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH SIDE, AND WOULD BE EFFECTED THROUGH CENTRAL JCIA MECHANISM. PROTOCOL DIRECTED EACH SIDE TO GATHER INFORMATION

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INDEPENDENTLY AND HAND IT OVER TO THE OTHER. NO SUB-COMMITTEE OF JCIA OR OTHER JOINT MOBILE GROUP WOULD CONCERN ITSELF WITH THIS SUBJECT. ASKED ABOUT A POSSIBLE ROLE FOR THE ICC OR ICRC ON CRASH AND GRAVE-SITE INSPECTION, SOTH POINTEDLY STATED THAT NO NON-LPF CONTINGENT COULD CONCERN ITSELF WITH THESE MATTERS IN THE "LIBERATED ZONE." THE PROTOCOL MADE IT CLEAR THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUCH MATTERS RESTED

EXCLUSIVELY WITH THE RESPECTIVE PARTIES, "EACH OF WHICH RETAINS CONTROL OVER ITS OWN ZONE UNTIL NATIONAL ELECTIONS AND FORMATION OF A PERMANENT COALITION GOVERNMENT."

5. SOTH REPEATED THAT AFTER JCIA BEGAN MEETING AND SCALE OF PRIORITIES WAS ESTABLISHED, LPF WOULD BEGIN FURNISHING INFORMATION RELEVANT TO ITS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER ARTICLE 18. IT WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY TO AWAIT FORMATION OF GOVERNMENT, THOUGH OBVIOUSLY THAT OBJECTIVE WOULD HAVE PRIORITY IN JCIA DELIBERATIONS.

6. OTHER ASPECTS OF EMBOFF'S CONVERSATION WITH SOTH REPORTED SEPTEL.  
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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